

The **TURBO** **Charger**

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To our clients and friends

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Don't Touch That Dial



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*Keeping
cool under
pressure
pays off*

Denis, paper machine superintendent for a paper mill in northern Ontario, Canada, told Session 7B of the Leadership Development Lab (LDL):

“On January 30, 2008, Paper Machine #4 was in the process of starting up after a long repair to the Dryer 18 backside bearing. The operators were in the process of threading the sheet at the incline press into the dryer section. As I passed by the Dry End steam pane at 10:56 a.m., I noticed that the second section blow-through controller was set to 0 psi versus 10 psi. I know by experience that the proper blow-through setting is crucial to prevent dryer flooding because it's the tool to get proper steam to condensate differentials.

Since the backtender was at the Wet End threading the sheet, I tried waving at him, but with all the noise, he could not hear me. I asked the operator at the Dry End to reset the blow-through and to tell the backtender that I requested the change. I thought that maybe the backtender had forgotten to set it properly, or someone else had tampered with the setting during the dryer repairs. I continued on my way to my 11:00 meeting.

Shortly after 11:15, I received a call from the supervisor, more or less accusing me of actually changing the set points without the operator's knowledge. I calmly explained the sequence of events. I felt justified with my angry feelings because I believed that I had taken the proper actions. I followed Union protocol to the letter, the union agreement stipulation that staff is not to touch machine control settings.

A few minutes later, I received another call from the supervisor telling me that the Union Vice President wanted to review the incident. I agreed to meet all of them at the Dry End at 11:30, and I explained to them that I had to leave early to attend my afternoon session of the LDL at 12:30.

On my way to the booth, I was thinking of my LDL training – I need to stay calm. I was determined to act as a ‘thermostat rather than a thermometer.’ We met as planned at the Dry End booth. I explained the events, and we all left with a satisfactory agreement.

“The next day, I praised both the Union rep and the supervisors for handling the situation immediately, rather than bringing the issues to a grievance meeting. We all felt good after that.

The lesson I learned from this experience is that when I keep my cool, I can work with the Union reps without having the issue escalate to a grievance meeting. The action I call you to take is when you see something wrong, take the time to handle the problem in accordance with contract standards. Keep your cool if the situation gets out of hand. The benefit you will gain is mutual respect and trust of all parties involved.”

“Even unreasonable people may become reasonable if you remain reasonable.”

~~~ Alan Cohen

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